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ABSTRACT

This practical booklet, intended for those who are transcribing oral interviews into manuscript form, provides transcribing and editing guidelines that are particularly pertinent to oral history interviews. The major factor involved in a transcription is its editing. Editing is defined as making the material suitable for use by researchers and the general public. The guidelines presented in this booklet are based on the assumption that the transcript will be edited in an accepted manuscript format. Obtaining a good transcriber/editor is emphasized. Before beginning to transcribe, basic elements of editorial policy should be set in order to maintain uniformity in transcribing. Individual interviews may be transcribed and edited with slight variations according to the nature of the interview. Examples of editing styles are provided for overlapping speech, syntax, inaccuracies, false starts, dangling sentences, fuzzy thinking, and paragraphing. Suggestions are made for performing the audit check as a quality control and for making interviewee corrections of the transcript as accountability. Instructions for putting the final text together cover the table of contents, headings, and indexing. Samples of transcribing and editing guidelines, an audit check sheet, the title page, and a transcript page conclude the document. (ND)

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TRANSCRIBING WITHOUT TEARS

A Guide to Transcribing and Editing Oral History Interviews

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INTRODUCTION

This practical booklet is directed toward those who are approaching that critical juncture--to transcribe or not to transcribe--or who have just turned the corner on the road to transcribing and processing their interviews in manuscript form.

Too often transcribing has been the poor relation of oral history, and individuals and projects have been encouraged to regard it as drudgery. In fact, the preparation of an interview manuscript is an exciting and highly satisfying activity when approached with the proper understanding of the nature and value of oral history material.

The end product of an oral history interview is not merely a little box with a tape inside, whose fascinating contents are known only to God and those intimately connected with the project. The real objective is to make the contents of the interviews available to others in the most usable and accessible form. It is important that each interview be recognized as a total package of words and phrases, ideas and information, with an identity of its own. This identity emerges from the audio to the print medium through the transcribing process.

The Editing Controversy

Among the growing number of people who produce or use oral history interviews, there is a lively debate about editing interview transcripts. There are basically two camps.

On one side, the purists, who are interested in the verbal character of the interview, are either loath to transcribe at all or feel that any editing for more than punctuation and paragraphing is a distortion of the spoken word not to be tolerated. This is a minority position at present, but there may be a trend toward greater use of the original audio format to study interviews from the perspective of psycholinguistics or to investigate other non-written elements.

On the other side are those interested in the informational content and/or literary narrative of the interview and those who wish to disseminate their interviews to the widest possible audience. While these individuals and projects keep the original tapes under archival conditions for reference or future use, they follow a basic editorial policy to produce transcripts in consistent, accepted manuscript format.

The guidelines presented in this booklet are based on the assumption that the final product of your interviews will be edited transcripts. Editing here is simply defined as making a piece of literary material suitable for use by researchers or the general public. However, editorial form is considered to follow not only the function of the interview, i.e. its ultimate use, but also its unique content. Therefore each set of interviews is likely to have its own variation.

One Method

It is possible to combine the transcribing and editing procedures to produce a finished transcript in one basic step. This requires a hybrid person, the "transcriber/editor," whose primary qualification is not wpm but verbal skill. The time spent in carefully recruiting and even more carefully training this person (who may be the interviewer) pays many dividends.

First, the separate steps of editing and routine re-typing are eliminated, speeding up the completion of the final manuscript and perhaps saving time and wage dollars. Second, combining the transcribing and editing function in one competent person seems to have a synergistic effect, maximizing the quality of the transcript as measured by fidelity to the original expression and clarity of style.

With experience, the transcriber/editor will turn out manuscripts with no few errors that most corrections indicated by the auditor can be made without re-typing whole pages.

Whether or not this combined approach is adopted, certain steps must be taken to prepare oral history transcripts of consistent quality and format.



FIRST ON THE AGENDA

Setting Editorial Policy

Basic elements of editorial policy should be written down and understood by everyone in order to maintain the uniformity of the transcripts. These rules should be kept as simple as possible. It can be very helpful to put them in the form of a sheet which also gives rules for margin settings, footnotes and spacing. (See sample pages 33-36.) These sheets can be posted close to the work area of the transcriber, the editor and auditor and are a handy reference for the student transcriber as well.

There are four basic conventions in oral history transcribing/editing.

1. No one's grammar should consistently be tidied up. However, clarification of dangling questions or phrases, or actual misstatements is useful to the reader.
2. False starts are usually retained intact only when they indicate a potentially significant thought.
3. Extensive "stage directions" which describe non-verbal actions are distracting. Laughter and significant gestures may be shown in brackets.

4. The rule of thumb governing crutch words such as "you know," "you see," "so to speak," is to keep only a few, to preserve the flavor of the speech.

The following points should also be covered: punctuation, including all possible differences regarding commas and semicolons, ellipses, dashes, quotations and capitalization, paragraphing, numbers, and abbreviations and initials.

On the sample sheets of instructions at the back of the booklet, rules for standard elements of usage have been omitted. These can be found in any common style manual. Spelling conventions can also be a problem, and a list of frequently misspelled words should be included in your policy sheets.

Alternatives in Editing Style

With basic policy established as a firm foundation, individual interviews or groups of interviews may be transcribed and edited with slight variations according to the nature of the interviews. The examples on the following pages illustrate different approaches which might be applicable. They all reflect a common underlying policy which calls for no substantive changes in the narrative and leaves intact original distinctiveness of speech and phrasing. In all of the cases, the interviews were transcribed and edited simultaneously.

Samples of Editing Style

Verbatim (as heard)

No uh my father did not follow the trade uh he went into business as a young man had a unfortunate experience in business, lost quite a bit of money and uh became obsessed with the idea that he was might die with tuberculosis which his father had died of, and so interestingly enough he was uh decided he he must work outdoors in order to avoid this dread disease and so interestingly enough he got for himself uh a job in the Post Office Department as a letter carrier and spent all of his life out of doors never dying of tuberculosis but becoming a very very rugged man, an exceedingly rugged man.

Final (as typed)

No. My father did not follow the trade. He went into business. As a young man [he] had an unfortunate experience in business; [he] lost quite a bit of money. He became obsessed with the idea that he might die with tuberculosis, which his father had died of. And so, interestingly enough, he decided that he must work outdoors in order to avoid this dread disease. So he got for himself a job in the Post Office Department, as a letter carrier, and spent all of his life out of doors, never dying of tuberculosis, but becoming a very, very rugged man--an exceedingly rugged man.

It is obvious here that one is dealing with an experienced speaker and story teller, making a verbatim transcript vital to the quality of the work. It is equally clear that little editing was needed.

(B indicates interruptions by third person)

Verbatim
(as heard)

A: Yeah, because if I had down here on the 6th of June I went over to the Mercer PTA

B: right

A: to sit down and talk

B: and that was the same night Sue Doe and we told

A: Sue Doe got up there and they crucified her

B: right

A: because they didn't want any model school or any part of it and they took em apart for not enough men no minority boy for everything they could possibly do wrong.

B: And that was the next night

A: yeah and the next night they were over at our place and they started gettin the same treatment.

Final
(as typed)

A: I have down here, on the 6th of June, I went over to the Mercer PTA, the same night Sue Doe [was there]. Sue Doe got up there and they crucified her, because they didn't want any part of a "model school." They took them apart for not [having] enough men [in the group], no minorities [represented]--for everything they could possibly do wrong. The next night they were over at our place and they started getting the same treatment [from the group that was present].

This interview was intended as a fact finding mission and was complicated by the presence of a third person who interjected numerous comments. Without considerable editing the transcript would have been virtually useless.

Verbatim
(as heard)

At any rate one of the guidelines we've used in this consideration is that we would try to keep the percentage of black population in a school around 30 to 40 percent and try to prevent the percentage of black population in a school above 40 percent.

Final
(as typed)

At any rate, one of the guidelines we have used in this consideration is that we would try to keep the percentage of black population in a school around 30 to 40 percent; try to prevent [it from exceeding] 40 percent.

The kind of editing that clarifies and removes redundant phrases is illustrated in this example. It is particularly useful for preventing any misunderstanding on the part of the reader.

Verbatim
(as heard)

Well now that you see of course you see people of, people of large means during the summertime would move out of town, go to oh Watkins's Glen or you know Saratoga, that that was a great popular area for people around here to go to or oh less likely perhaps to the beach at that time. Many might go to places like Berryville up toward the mountains and nearby in Virginia you know where the but for those of us who mostly spent the summer in town, that applied to pretty nearly everybody who was not connected with the Congress because they left quickly, excursions. Now you see drives easily with horse vehicles but where else? Well specifically with Georgetown the Canal.

Final
(as typed)

Of course, people of large means, during the summertime, would move out of town to Watkins's Glen or Saratoga--that was a popular area for people around here to go to--or, less likely perhaps, to the beach at that time. I go to places like... toward the mountains... Virginia. But for those of us who mostly spent the summer in town--that applied to almost everybody who was not connected with the Congress, because they left quickly--excursions. (We would go on) drives, (which were) easily (taken with) horse vehicles. Where else? Well, specifically, (those of us in) Georgetown (would go along) the Canal.

Here the style and flavor of the interviewee has not been lost in the editing process; it has been made readable. The best storyteller in the world will occasionally falter or fail to clearly express an idea and it becomes necessary for the editor to clarify a passage for him.

Deciding which approach to use for a single interview or set of interviews involves several assessments. What are your overall objectives? What kind of manuscript do you want? What will you use it for? What is the style and quality of the interviewee's narrative? Were any difficulties experienced which necessitate more patching up than would normally be acceptable?

If this is a group project and the interviewer, transcriber, editor and audit checker are not one and the same person (as would be the case with student projects or other individual efforts) the staff should get together to consider these questions and arrive at a mutual understanding of the editorial style called for. A single individual should be equally clear, in his own mind, of the direction he will take, before plunging in.

This is a good time for the interviewer to provide the transcriber with a list of names, places and unusual and/or foreign phrases which were used during the interview(s). Your work can now proceed smoothly.

STARTING TO TRANSCRIBE

Assemble all your paraphernalia--editing and style guidelines, list of names, correction papers or fluid, dictionary, etcetera. Having to fetch needed items in the midst of your work will slow you down and interrupt your concentration. As you build up experience, you will find that you are able to turn out a quality transcript in much less than the 6-12 hours per hour of tape usually required.

Always make at least one carbon of the transcript, depending upon your access to cheap copying service. You'll be investing a great deal of time in the transcription and will want to have a spare copy for security.

When starting work on a new topic, it is desirable to listen to an entire tape before beginning to transcribe. This preliminary listening provides a useful audio overview. If the narrator is new to you, try to grasp his style of speech before committing it to paper. Always listen ahead several minutes at a time for paragraphing.

Typical Headaches

The following examples of transcribing problems provide a visual illustration of the editing process. Whether the final transcript is produced in two steps, using a blue pencil on the first draft, or in one step, with the transcriber editing in her mind as she proceeds, the final manuscript should be the same.



Overlapping Speech

When both the interviewer and interviewee speak simultaneously, you can keep the question in, artificially consolidating the comments into complete sentences, as illustrated in the first example, or indicate the interruption with a three dot ellipsis (see page 34), as in the second example.

Verbatim (as heard)

- Q: Was this fairly early in the year?
- A: No this was actually in the middle of the year
- Q: In the middle of the year?
- A: this was around I guess it
- Q: of last year?
- A: the the well it would have been the early this year
- Q: Well of the last school year?
- A: Of the last school year yes
- Q: early 1972?
- A: early 72. I think it was either January or February.

Final (as typed)

- Q: Was this fairly early in the year?
- A: No, this was actually in the middle of the year.
- Q: Of the last school year?
- A: Yes, early 1972. I think it was either January or February [of 1972].

Verbatim
(as heard)

Q: What was your input into those meetings?

A: Well you uh the meetings

Q: What was the how did you perceive, number one, the purpose of these meetings? Why were they held with the principals and then

A: to uh you mean oh i see

Q: and then secondly what was your part

A: to uh to inform to get the people in the schools who might have come who may be related to this whole problem, to explain to them what the situation was.

Final
(as typed)

Q: What was your input into those meetings?

A: Well, the meetings. . . .

Q: How did you perceive, number one, the purpose of these meetings? Why were they held with the principals? And second, what was your part [in them]?

A: Oh, i see. Well, [their purpose was] to inform, to get the people in the schools who may be related to this whole problem, to explain to them what the situation was.

At times you will want to change the syntax because the thought would be unintelligible if no change were made. There are times, however, when had as it may be, the structure is kept the same to assure the retention of the interviewee's character. In the hypothetical illustration below, consistent speech pattern should not be changed, because to do so would destroy its authenticity. On the other hand, if there is a rare grammatical slip made by an otherwise sophisticated narrator (as shown in the second example of syntax) the correct grammatical form would be substituted and the grammatical error treated as a false start.

Verbatim
(retained in final typing)

And I says to him, "I don't see why we
got to do it that way. We could of got
best results by not doing nothing."
And he goes, "You're right."

Verbatim
(as heard)

We huffed and puffed and bl I
mean blew, the man down.

Final
(as typed)

We huffed and puffed and blew the
man down.

The following example of syntax is taken from an interview with a sixth grade student. The transcript retains the contrast between youthful grammar and mature perceptions.

Verbatim
(as heard)

Well um we first found out by our principal and we were we were um told that it was supposed to be a model school it was just going to be a model school for you know just to be turned in and in a lot of ways it already was 'cause we had special work there that a lot of other schools didn't have.

Final
(as typed)

Well, we first found out by our principal that it was supposed to be a "model school" . . . It was just going to be a "model school" for, you know, just be turned in (to). . . . And in a lot of ways it already was, 'cause we had special work there that a lot of other schools didn't have.

If the interviewee is in error, make a note of the mistake and bring it to his attention when returning the transcript to him for his corrections. If the change is not made by him, insert the correction in a footnote. You can also place "[sic]" after the offending word or phrase, or correct it in a footnote if appropriate.

Verbatim
(as heard)

A: So I proceeded to kill that off by having the title of the division changed and it became the Division of University Students, a very deliciously ambiguous title.

Q: I believe the first title was "Special and Extension Students," but I will have to check my notes on that.

A: It may easily have been.

Verbatim
(as heard)

Well, girls tended to blackjack rather than marbles you know, pick-up jacks.

Final
(as typed)

A: So I proceeded to kill that off by having the title of the division changed, and it became the Division of University Students--a very deliciously ambiguous title.

Q: I believe the first title was "Special and Extension Students," but I will have to check notes on that.*

A: It may easily have been.

* "Special and Extension Students" was the correct title.

Final
(as typed)

Well, girls tended to blackjack [sic] rather than marbles--you know, pick-up jacks.

False Starts

The question here is whether the content of the false start justifies leaving it in. Does the speaker merely repeat the comment or does he actually change it in the sentence which immediately follows, thus changing the meaning?

Verbatim (as heard)

At first I was under the impression that I had been told by the community people who were organizing the agenda from the school group that the teachers would be given 15 minutes to speak.

Final (as typed)

I had been told by the community people, who were organizing the agenda from the school group, that the teachers would be given 15 minutes to speak.

In the following example, four dots (like periods), with a space between each dot, but no space preceding the first dot, are used to indicate the uncompleted sentence which was probably not a false start, but was the result of an excess of candor.

Verbatim (as heard)

Well he never let me. It was not my normal job to attend those meetings.

Final (as typed)

Well, he never let me. . . . It was not my normal job to attend those meetings.

Dangling Sentences

The major decision here is whether or not to fill in a dangling sentence.

Verbatim
(as heard)

Q: Did she have a budget of her own a weekly budget or what was. . . ?

Final
(as typed)

Q: Did she have budget of her own--a weekly budget?

Verbatim
(as heard)

And of course they had a lot of trouble it may surprise you with what I guess today they call with the automobile drag racing, do they not, when these kids well horse racing racing the horses. They had an awful lot of that.

Final
(as typed);

And, of course, they had a lot of trouble--it may surprise you--with what I guess today they call, with the automobile, "drag racing," do they not, when these kids. . . Well, horse racing--racing the horses. . . They had an awful lot of that.

Fuzzy Thinking

When an idea is not clearly expressed, brackets are an effective tool for eliminating confusion. The corrections in the example below were decided upon in consultation with the interviewee. It may also sometimes be necessary to make deletions in order to clarify a thought when opposing thoughts are expressed.

Verbatim (as heard)

Figure out how much this class was producing per student hour say if you divide what you were going to take in and it came out per student hour at instead of the \$5 which a student paid and which it came out we were getting the equivalent of something better than that, that amount I would allow the Department to use in subsidizing advanced courses where there was a heavy built-in overage that naturally came to a lower section, I would let them use that to subsidize the next advanced course.

Final (as typed)

[You] figure out how much this class was producing per student hour--say [a three-credit course, with ten students at \$5 per credit hour, produced \$150. Subtract from that the instructor's salary--for example, \$100 for an Assistant Professor--and you had a net of \$50]. Where there was a heavy built-in overage that naturally came to a lower section, [say one with 30 students, which would have produced \$450, with a net, then, of \$350, that amount] I would let them use to subsidize the next advanced course.

2.1

To make a lengthy monologue easy to read, break it up into several paragraphs per page. However, remember that it is important to listen ahead lest in your haste to divide the narrative you begin a new paragraph too soon, only to encounter a legitimate opportunity a couple of sentences later.

Verbatim
(as heard)

I was chagrined enough toward the end of that meeting to wonder what my role and what our company's role should be. I openly said the resources that I had indicated were available to the community at this point were not available, that we would have to reconsider what our company will do in this matter. I went back to my apartment and went to sleep dwelling on the issues that were raised. There was obviously a good guy-bad guy situation. We were the good guys and Jones was the bad guy and I felt that was a premature judgement. It might come but there was still time to talk to Jones and see if we couldn't work cooperatively.

Final
(as typed)

I was chagrined enough toward the end of that meeting to wonder what my role and what our company's role should be. I openly said the resources that I had indicated were available to the community at this point were not available; that we would have to reconsider what our company will do in this matter.

I went back to my apartment and went to sleep dwelling on the issues that were raised. There was obviously a good guy-bad guy situation. We were the good guys and Jones was the bad guy and I felt that was a premature judgement. It might come, but there was still time to talk to Jones and see if we couldn't work cooperatively.

ON TO THE AUDIT-CHECK

The auditor's task is an important one which is of great value to the project as a whole. In a sense, the auditor--who may be the interviewer--is the Quality Control Officer, responsible for checking to make sure that the interview transcript is faithful to both the original speech and the editorial policy. A few suggestions for the auditor are:

Mark errors and omissions on a separate paper which has been designed for this purpose.* A light penciled check mark at the top right hand corner and a paperclip in the right hand margin at the point of error make it easier for the transcriber to spot the needed corrections.

Try to fill in those words and phrases which the transcriber/editor found inaudible. A mere reminder that they are missing is hardly helpful. Familiarize yourself with the speech patterns of the interviewee before proceeding with the audit-check. Keep a copy of the transcribing and editing guidelines nearby to use as a style reference.

*See sample, page 36

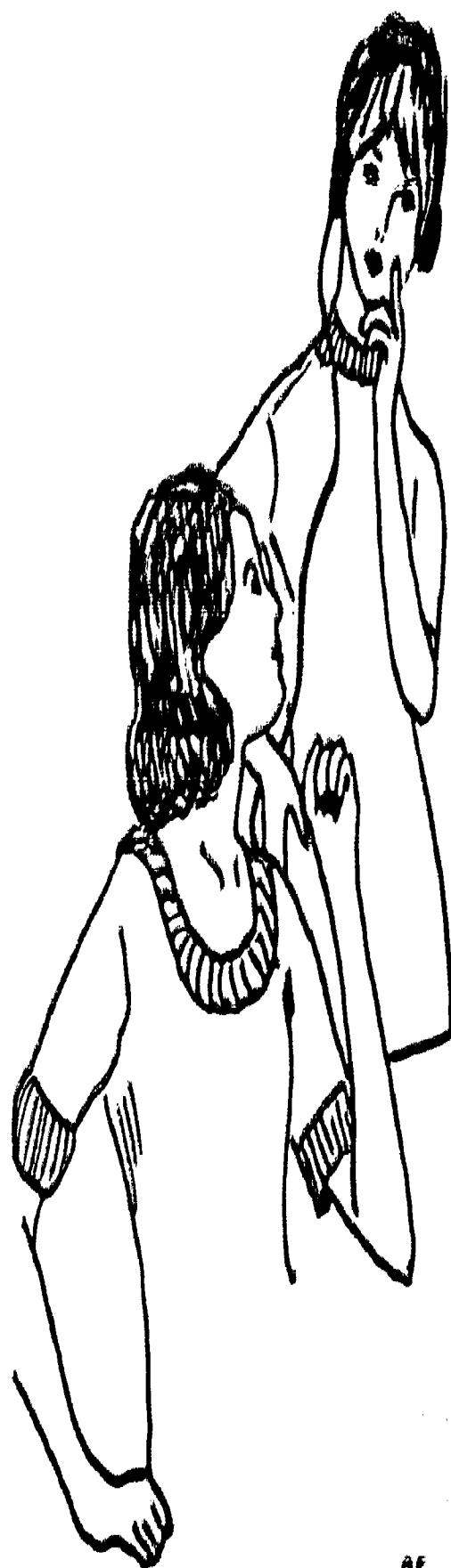
Accountability

An accurate, complete transcription of oral history interviews is a major responsibility of those involved in the project. It is imperative that a transcript NOT be made available to the public until all missing words and phrases and all names and persons and places, properly spelled, have been filled in.

Your ears are better than two! If a word or phrase is inaudible, the transcriber should ask the interviewer or another person to listen to it with her. Often two people listening together can supply the missing part.

If the principals are unable to supply what is needed to correct omissions, it falls to the transcriber/editor to research the missing material, a procedure which often requires a good deal of legwork. Reference libraries are, of course, especially useful in this effort, but the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the transcriber/editor are invaluable.

Filling in the blanks is best accomplished by leaving space in the transcript, finishing the transcription process and then taking the necessary steps to complete the work. Stopping in the middle of a transcript is disruptive, inefficient and time-consuming.



If the first draft of the edited transcript was well done it will be possible to make many of the auditor's corrections right on the page, only occasionally re-typing a whole page. When your team becomes experienced, you should never have to re-type entire manuscripts.

INTERVIEWEE CORRECTIONS

It is difficult to assess the impact of proposed changes in copyright law on oral history protocol concerning interviewee input into transcript editing. There is a possibility that a greater mutuality of rights will evolve between the interviewee on one hand and the project on the other. At present, final editorial control over the transcript is vested in the interviewee.

Pending the establishment of clear guidelines on the matter, the interviewee should be given the opportunity to read the completed transcript and to make additions or corrections, preferably without deletions or blatant editorial changes. Only when his corrections have been incorporated into the transcript can you proceed to bind it in final form.



How you have the interviewee make those changes is a point to establish clearly in advance. If you have a series of interviews with one person and have been attempting to follow the editorial preferences he indicated after the first transcript, few changes should be called for. You may have interviewees note their corrections on separate pieces of paper so that you can add them to the transcripts in your own fashion with a minimum of re-typing, or you may ask them to make handwritten corrections on the manuscripts themselves.

Final Text

You must make sure the origin of all material in the final text is clear to the reader. The interviewee's handwritten corrections, left on the transcript, speak for themselves. You may choose to type them onto the original manuscript in such a way as to indicate ~~that they~~ are additions, perhaps through the use of a different typeface. If the page is simply ~~corrected~~ with the corrections incorporated directly into the text, you should state this in an editorial preface to the transcript. The reader will then know that any material ~~added~~ has been added by the project, and that any other discrepancies between the final text and the tape are due to interviewee changes.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Several loose ends have to be tied up before the transcript can be bound and made available to the public.

Building a Table of Contents

In most instances, headings can be taken directly from the interviewer's questions. For example:

Question

"Universities, of necessity, have come to regard endowments as a mixed blessing, bringing liabilities as well as assets. Could you give me an example of how this might occur?"

Heading

BEQUESTS AND ENDOWMENTS--MIXED BLESSINGS

When the interviewer's questions do not provide material for a suitable heading, or when the interviewee strays from the substance of a question, the heading can be drawn from the interviewee's remarks.

Remarks of Interviewee

"Now all that was being done in the light of what was being known as the University Plan, which was President Welling's big and glorious idea of the great University."

Heading

PRESIDENT WELLING'S "UNIVERSITY PLAN"

It is well to remember that headings should be kept short and to the point.

Indexing

The amount and degree of indexing will vary from project to project. An acceptable minimum could be an index of proper names. Use standard index cards, one card per name or subject. List additional citations chronologically.

Name →

Description →

MARSHALL, Thurgood

U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Transcript →

Identification

ELK Transcripts

April 7, 1975

pp. 7-10

May 3, 1975

p. 9

← page(s)

WRAPPING IT UP

With all interviewee corrections added and the manuscript assembled with title page, copy of release, table of contents and index, one last step remains before you can sign off on the interview: final proofing.

One person should have the responsibility for making a last check for accuracy and completeness, and it might well be the project director. Remember, the transcript will be the permanent form of the interview most people use. If you didn't spot errors or omissions, you can be sure your first reader will.

When the transcript passes this final muster with flying colors, it is ready for public consumption. The life-like and intelligible narrative will be appreciated by both casual readers and serious researchers.

TRANSCRIPTION AND EDITING GUIDELINES

Sample Form

Left page edge = 10; left margin (Question/Answer) = 22; right margin = 100.
 First tab set (body of text) = 37; second tab set (paragraphs) = 42; page number = four lines from top at 95; begin text four more lines down. Double space text. Indicate end of tape: [End side I, cont'd side II] or [End side II, end of interview]. Bottom margin = approximately 1-1/2" from bottom of page.

Subject	Rule	Example
COMMAS:	In a series of three or more words, phrases, or clauses ending with the expression <u>and so forth</u> , <u>and so on</u> , <u>and the like</u> , or <u>etc.</u> , commas precede and follow the expression.	He felt that increased activity in athletics, sororities, the Drama Department, and so on, would improve our image.
	A series of three or more words, phrases, or clauses takes a comma between each of the elements and before a conjunction separating the last two.	It meant an increase in spending, paper work, and use of secretarial help, as well as a general revision of policy.

Subject	Rule	Example
SEMICOLONS:	<p>In a series of statements in which commas are needed within individual phrases, use semicolons to separate the phrases, providing there are three or more in the series and that the phrases have parallel elements.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Even though they are connected by a conjunction, clauses of a compound sentence, which are very long and which have commas within them, are separated with semicolons.</p>	<p>They graded on a curve 80, 81, 80 and above, A B; anything below 80, C D.</p>
	<p>-----</p> <p>Even though they are connected by a conjunction, clauses of a compound sentence, which are very long and which have commas within them, are separated with semicolons.</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>He's the man who went down to negotiate the treaty, got into a scrap, had his commission revoked, and various other things, and was secretary to Andrew Jackson during the time that Andrew Jackson was involved in difficulties that led to his sending his nephew, who was his regular secretary, back home.</p>
ELLIPSES:	<p><u>Three</u> dots (like periods), with a space between each dot and before and after the first and last, to indicate a long pause or interruption.</p> <p>-----</p> <p><u>Four</u> dots (like periods), with a space between each dot, but no space preceding the first dot are used to indicate false starts or trailing sentences.</p>	<p>I felt he was being . . . insensitive . . . insensitive in his attitude.</p>
	<p>-----</p> <p><u>Four</u> dots (like periods), with a space between each dot, but no space preceding the first dot are used to indicate false starts or trailing sentences.</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>The students used to do more of that. Now it seems as if they are too. . . . Well, what can I say?</p>

Subject	Rule	Example
DASHES:	Two hyphens without a space between or on either side of them. Use dashes to indicate interjections or parenthetical thoughts.	It was cut from the Kennebec River--Kennebec lee was particularly choice for its complete clarity--and brought all the way to George- town.
	To precede the summarizing phrase in a sentence when that phrase refers to the subject of the sentence, use a dash.	You would find agricultural implements stores, stores which sold seed and ferti- lizer, flour and feed stores--all prepared to service the agricultural community.
BRACKETS:	Use to indicate editorial additions.	They'd hire horse [drawn] carriages [to] drive to the beach.
	Brackets are used to indicate an outside interruption.	. . . this general discussion, [interruption, Dr. Jones' secretary enters and dates are checked.]
	They are also used routinely to fully identify individuals referred to.	[Dr. John A.] Smith and I went along with the others. Bobby [Jones] stayed behind.
FOOTNOTES:	Underline down one space from last line of text, #37-60	Even a little youngster from Georgetown could come over here and walk to 2023 G Street,* lift up the latch of an iron gate and walk in. *The University's first building in its present location.

SAMPLE OF AUDIT CHECK SHEET

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Oral History Interview

with

Dr. Elmer Louis Kayser
Professor Emeritus of European History
Dean Emeritus of the Division of University Students

FIRST YEARS WITH THE UNIVERSITY
1917-1921

April 22, 1975

Conducted by

Mary Jo Beerling
Director, University Library Oral History Program

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SAMPLE FIRST PAGE OF TRANSCRIPT

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Dr. Elmer Louis Kayser
University Historian

April 22, 1975

Lisner Hall
George Washington University

by

MAE S. Doring

for

The Oral History Program
University Library

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QUESTION: Dr. Kayser, at the end of our last session I believe you had just graduated from the College, and you were shortly to enter on a period of immense activity, which paralleled that of the University. One has to wonder how that came about.

ANSWER: Well, I often wonder, in retrospect, myself how it came about. But, the answer, quite frankly speaking, was this: that just as I, individually, was graduating--the very same spring--the United States entered the First World War, as a belligerent. The result of that, of course, was very interesting, because there came, a young A.D., appointed instructor in History, was embarking upon my teaching career at the